



TRINITY CITY PLANNING & ZONING MEETING

February 22, 2005
7:00 pm

The Trinity Planning Board held their February 22, 2005 meeting at the Trinity United Memorial Methodist Church. A quorum was present.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman J. R. Ewings; Planning Board Members Linda Gant, Vernel Gibson, Buddy Maness, Richard McNabb, Danny Phillips, Melvin Patterson, Paula Peace and Robbie Sikes.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE

OTHERS PRESENT: City Attorney, Bob Wilhoit; Planning/Zoning Administrator and Code Enforcement Officer, Adam Stumb; City Clerk, Debbie Hinson, Council members Bridges, Labonte, Reddick, and Talbert, members of the press, and other interested parties.

ITEM 1. Call to Order.

Chairman Ewings called the February 22, 2005 meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ITEM 2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Ewings led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3. Invocation.

Planning Board member Vernel Gibson gave the invocation.

ITEM 4. Approval of Minutes: January 31, 2005

Chairman Ewings called for any changes or corrections to the January 31, 2005 minutes.

Hearing no changes, *Board member Peace made a motion to adopt the minutes of the January 31, 2004 minutes as written. Board member Maness seconded the motion. The motion and second was approved unanimously by all Board members present.*

ITEM 5. Public Comments Section

Chairman Ewings opened the floor to anyone who wished to make comments.

Hearing none, Chairman Ewings closed the Public Comments Section and continued with the next item on the Agenda.

ITEM 6.

Trin-Thom Amendment

- a. Staff Presentation**
- b. Opening Comments from Blue Ridge Properties**
- c. Public Hearing**

Chairman Ewings called for Mr. Stumb to brief Board members on this item.

Mr. Stumb discussed a request made to the city for a change in the density allowed in the Trin-Thom Zoning district to accommodate apartments. The current density allowed in this district is 12,000 sq/ft for the first two (2) units and 4,000 sq/ft for each additional unit. This equals approximately 168 units in number of units or approximately 11 apartments per acre.

The request for increased density by the Blue Ridge Companies for this area is 12,000 sq/ft for the first two (2) units and 2,500 sq/ft for each additional unit. This equals approximately 267 units for the proposed area of approximately 15.5 acres, or 17 units per acre.

The difference in what is currently allowed and what is being requested is approximately 99 additional units for this zoning district.

This request is to increase density for the Trin-Thom District.

At the conclusion of Mr. Stumb's review, Chairman Ewings opened the floor to anyone from Blue Ridge properties.

Bill Millis, 902 Forest Hill Drive, High Point, NC: I am one of the three (3) developers developing this area that will be known as Colonial Village. I am not associated with Blue Ridge Development.

Mr. Millis discussed conversations held with Mr. Loflin, himself, and engineers concerning the lay of the land, the zoning and other opportunities. We felt very quickly that there was a need for something other than just single family. Currently between the Thomasville and Trinity portion we will build close to 200 single family homes over a 4 to 5 year period. We have plans in the Thomasville portion for approximately 64 townhomes, as well as approximately 8 ½ acres for commercial development. There is approximately 7 ½ acres in Trinity that is designated for commercial development.

Mr. Millis discussed his contact with Wachovia concerning the possibility of apartment development in this area and received their approval. After discussion, we decided to go with the Blue Ridge Companies. Mr. Millis discussed properties developed near Guilford College by this company. Rentals of these units range from \$750.00 to \$900.00 per month. They offer high security and many amenities such as a club house, swimming pool, full fitness center, business center, and a small theater. He discussed conversations held with Steve Gooze, Davidson County EDC concerning alternative housing in this area that will be needed since Unilin is locating in this area.

The Blue Ridge Company is proposing an investment of approximately 15 million dollars in development. They have done their research and marketing study analysis and feel that 264 units or 11 buildings with 24 units per building is what needs to go in this area. All of the amenities offered create extra overhead and additional income is needed to provide all of these services. Allowing an increase from 168 units to 264 units would provide the necessary income.

We are excited about Blue Ridge Companies and know the kind of properties they build. This type of development would increase the tax base and revenues that will come to Trinity.

Tony Dennis, 4431 Meadowbrook View Road, Trinity; Meadowbrook View Road dead ends into this property. I feel that when this land is developed the City should consider long and hard what goes in here. This is prize property and whatever is developed here, the City of Trinity will have to live with. I would hate to see whatever goes on this property become an eye sore for the City. We would like to see whatever goes here prosper as well as be something that is good for the city for a very long time. Once the decisions are made and this property is developed it will be too late to change. I feel we should put whatever is the

highest tax base and best for the city here because the sewer is already there which gives this property high value. This is where development in Trinity will start and I would hate to see this property developed hastily without thought that may allow something to become an eye sore in 10 to 15 years.

Another concern we have in our neighborhood is the wetlands located in this property. The left side of Meadowbrook View Road is critical flood zone. There is a lot of water that comes through here when it rains.

Larry Hepler, 7818 Turnpike Road; My brother and I own 40 acres of property at 6024 Unity Street that is located across from this property. My main concern is the road. I do not believe the road can handle the traffic. There is currently an approximate ¼ mile backup every afternoon in this area. I do not believe apartments would look right in this vicinity. He also discussed fire protection, and over crowding in schools that may result in a development of this type. We just oppose this.

Attorney Wilhoit advised Chairman Ewings and persons speaking, that this issue was to address the density issue only. The Special Use Request will be discussed later.

With no others speaking, Chairman Ewings turned this item over to Board members for discussion and or action.

Board member Phillips asked if this amendment was in line with what Greensboro required for apartment complexes. Mr. Stumb stated the density was similar within the area. Thomasville has an R6 Zoning District that would allow almost the same or identical density as this.

Board members discussed how the units would be arranged. Board members were informed the buildings would be three (3) stories high with 8 units per floor. There was also discussion concerning an internal breezeway that would allow residents to go from one unit to another without exiting the building. Board members and Mr. Stumb discussed the chart included in handout (attached) that illustrated three (3) scenarios. Board members, Chairman Ewings, Mr. Millis, and Mr. Stumb discussed if the additional apartments would affect the way that allocation of sewer would be billed. Mr. Stumb advised Board members that development in the Trin-Thom district would not be deducted from Trinity sewer allocation even if this item was approved to allow more apartments than originally planned.

Chairman Ewings called for other questions. Hearing none, Chairman Ewings called for a recommendation.

Board member Phillips made a motion to approve the density; 12,000 sq/ft plus 2,500 sq/ft. I have looked the site over and think it is very compatible and think it will work. Board member Gibson seconded the motion. The motion and second was approved by 5 to 3 vote with Members Patterson, Peace, and Gant voting Nay.

ITEM 7. Special Use Hearing SPU-05-01

- a. Staff Presentations**
- b. Opening Comments from Blue Ridge Properties**
- c. Public Hearing- all who wish to speak must be under oath.**

Chairman Ewings opened this item and advised those that wished to speak they must be sworn to speak and only facts or evidence would be considered by the Board concerning this item.

Prior to speaking, Mr. Stumb, Planning/Zoning Administrator for the City of Trinity was sworn in by the City Clerk. After being sworn, Mr. Stumb advised Board members that a Special Use Permit had been requested by the Blue Ridge Companies for apartments for property located on Unity Street, north of the intersection of Unity and NC Highway 62. The current zoning for the property is the Trin-Thom Zoning District and the surrounding land use or zoning is residential or proposed residential. Mr. Stumb reviewed the Design Standards 1-8 (included in packet) for this proposed use that would be listed on the permit.

Prior to the Public Hearing, Mr. David Couch and Mr. Larry Hepler were sworn in by the City Clerk.

Mr. Couch, CEO Blue Ridge Properties, 2401 Penny Road, High Point, NC: Mr. Couch discussed local projects developed by his company that included the Piedmont Center in High Point as well as the new cinemas at Wendover and Penny Roads. He discussed his company's activities in multi-family development throughout North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Georgia.

Mr. Couch and his assistant Ms. Linda Hill used a power point presentation that included visual pictures to discuss and illustrate what the Blue Ridge Companies was proposing. Also provided to Board members was the (draft copy) only of the Apartment Plan.

- We are proposing 11 buildings with 24 units per building totaling 264 units.
- Market research indicates that rent on this particular property would range from \$650.00 to \$950.00 per month.
- At full build out the valuation of our development will range from 14 to 15 million dollars. Our research on your tax base indicates this development would produce approximately \$96,000.00 to \$100,000.00 annually.
- Parking is distributed throughout our property so there is ample parking around each building.
- We have three (3) points of entry to each building; one (1) at the front, and one (1) at each side. This allows easy access into and out of the building.
- Pictures of Friendly Manner located in Greensboro, also clubhouse photo that illustrated the proposed units as well as the entrance and exit points as described above.
- Floor Plans for 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units; 3 bedroom unit totals 1,450 square feet; 650 square feet for the smallest studio 1 bedroom apartment; a normal 1 bedroom apartment has approximately 890 square feet.
- Amenities package with this development includes a Clubhouse that offers a place for coffee, popcorn, DVD and video library that residents may use free of charge; a 24-hour business resource center that includes fax, copier, computer use, high speed internet, copying paper, pens, pencils, paperclips, etc.; Gourmet Coffee bar; full-scale fitness center; 24 seat movie theater; pet park; swimming pool with expanded sun deck; tennis courts; concierge services, and valet dry cleaning.
- Parcel post drop off and pick up

Mr. Couch discussed the request that his company made to Greensboro regarding an increase to the density of their Ordinance. We asked for the density to be increased from 8 to 10 to 16 to 18 units per acre. He discussed the rental fee for his property in comparison to some homeowner's mortgage and the fact that the rental fee for his property is greater than some home mortgages.

We target our communities to a renter by choice network. These are people who chose this as a lifestyle that will allow them to have amenities that they would otherwise not have access to. We pride ourselves on development of upscale, quality properties. Amenities have a fixed cost. Without density it is very difficult to make the amenities work out and to be able to provide amenities for 160 units or less in comparison to 264 units. We do a sensitivity analysis in terms of how large a project is and how many of those amenities we can afford to supply relative to the number of units we have.

At this time, Chairman Ewings asked if Mr. Couch would like to add anything else to his opening remarks for the Public Hearing Section. Mr. Couch advised Chairman Ewings and Board members that he addressed his comments during the opening section concerning the Blue Ridge properties request to increase density.

With no others speaking for this request, Chairman Ewings opened the request to anyone who wished to speak against the request.

Speaking against the request:

Larry Hepler, 7818 Turnpike Road; Mr. Hepler stated that he and his brother owned 40 acres of property on Unity Street directly across from this proposed project. Mr. Hepler stated his major concern was that the road would not handle the traffic. He also felt this would hurt the value of his property when his property was developed as residential properties. He discussed the traffic problems he witnessed already at

this location and how this would only increase the current backup of approximately ¼ mile every afternoon. Mr. Hepler stated his was opposed to this project.

With no others speaking for or against this request, Chairman Ewings closed the Public Hearing and opened the request to Board members for discussion and action if desired.

There was discussion between Board member Patterson and Mr. Couch concerning the location of the 3 bedroom units. Mr. Couch advised members that the configuration of each building had 6 (1) bedroom units, 12 (2) bedroom units, and 6 (3) bedroom units. Our configuration equates to 25% (1) bedroom, 50% (2) bedrooms, and 25% (3) bedrooms. Board member Patterson asked how many parking spaces were available for unit # 9. Mr. Couch discussed parking for this proposed project, advising board members that there were no dedicated parking spaces for any of the buildings and a parking garage. We meet and exceed our parking spaces. We have parking on each side of the buildings as well as those out front of the buildings. He discussed the parking spaces located on the side of the right hand and left hand of unit # 9 as well as the parking garage.

Board member Patterson commented on Mr. Hepler's concerns about traffic. He stated that he to had seen the traffic backup in this location and felt that the road would not handle the traffic for the Trin-Thom development much less this proposed development. I think the multi-family is a good thing but there are other planning issues that need to be looked at before that unit is built in order to accommodate it.

Board member Gant discussed the 2 entrances located on Unity Street and asked if Mr. Couch's company would pay to install a turning lane into the project.

Mr. Couch advised members that his company typically had traffic studies performed. I do not believe that we are at a point to determine whether there needs to be a turn lane for ingress and egress to this development. We typically run a traffic impact analysis that defines how our traffic relates to the traffic on the road and also how the traffic on the road relates to our development. Our approach typically is if there is a traffic concern for the street then there is a traffic concern for our residents. When the traffic impact study was done if needed we would install an acceleration lane out of our property. I do not know if we would be allowed to put a center lane to enter our property without going through the proper channels with NCDOT.

There was discussion concerning the 30 ft setback and how this would be handled if a turning lane had to be installed. Mr. Couch stated that if a turning lane had to be installed that typically what ever the planning requirements were without a turn lane example 30 feet, they would be doubled to 60 feet.

Ms. Gant discussed the traffic issues as well.

Chairman Ewings discussed the role that DOT played in this scenario. They will complete a traffic study and if they see there is a traffic problem they will put it in anyway. Nothing can be installed until DOT does their study that indicates it is feasible to install something.

Mr. Couch stated that if approved a driveway permit would need to be obtained from NCDOT. They complete a study called "level of service" of the road that includes their calculus of traffic generated from the apartment complex. We have put in several turn lanes with our other projects.

Chairman Ewings commented about the traffic problems that the City would incur. We will have traffic as development occurs. When the City decided to incorporate this changed everything.

Chairman Ewings and Mr. Millis discussed other developments and traffic problems that occurred from development. Mr. Millis discussed the number of entrances to the Trin-Thom development and advised Board members that there were a number of entrances off of Unity and County Line Road. We are in discussion with Davis-Martin-Powell, and Associates (engineers for the development), as well as DOT concerning them. The NCDOT will tell us what to do and it will not be an option. If they tell us we need turning lanes then they will be installed. They will study the flow and the impact of these units and determine what is needed for this development.

Board member Gibson stated he felt sure that all the pro's and con's were studied when looking at this development. He stated he felt sure that traffic was taken into consideration that might be generated from this development. I believe this project will enhance Trinity. It will be a beautiful area if you build according to the pictures that you have shown us tonight. I appreciate when someone will come into the area and help us be a city with a vision. I think that we should be thankful that we have someone like you to come in and bid on projects in Trinity.

There was further discussion between Board members concerning the number of exits for this development. Mr. Couch stated there was 2 entrance and exits for this project. Board member Phillips asked if a pet park would be at this location since it was not shown on the plan shared with Board members tonight. Mr. Couch stated the pet park typically is located around the club house area. The plan presented to you tonight is not a site plan and will not indicate areas such as this. Board member Phillips asked Mr. Couch if this development would have pet park and tennis courts even though it was not on this plan presented tonight. Mr. Couch advised Board members these would be included. Board member Gant discussed the washer/dryer hookups for these apartments. Mr. Couch advised members that each unit had a washer/dryer hookup as well as a laundry facility for the complex for those who wanted to use it. Mr. Phillips discussed a tour of other developments done by this company. These developments are done right and I was very impressed. He discussed the \$650.00 rental fee for the proposed Trinity development as opposed to the \$800.00 rental fee in Greensboro. Mr. Couch discussed how the location of the Greensboro property allowed a higher rental fee to be charged. We try to be realistic about what rental fee would be feasible for the area.

Board Member Patterson asked if the proposed apartments had elevators and if they were wood construction. Mr. Couch advised members there were no elevators and the units were wood construction. Member Gant asked if the units were equipped for handicapped persons. Mr. Couch advised Board members that all apartments on the ground floor were handicapped accessible.

Board member Phillips discussed his concerns that only 1 person spoke in opposition to this development and asked the Planning/Zoning Administrator if notices were sent only to property owners beside this project. Mr. Stumb, Planning/Zoning Administrator advised Board members that the Ordinance stated that we notice through the newspaper and send a notice to adjoining property owners (persons with property touching the proposed development). This is also the State Statute. This is all that is required but can be changed at a later date if that is something that the Board feels necessary to pursue.

With no more comments, Chairman Ewings called for a motion on this request.

Based on the facts that this request complied with the Trinity Ordinance Standards, Board member McNabb made a motion that this request be recommended to the Council to approve this Special Use Permit SPU-05-01. Board member Sikes seconded the motion. The motion and second was approved 7 to 1 with Board member Peace voting Nay.

ITEM 8. Recommendations Forms and Procedure

Chairman Ewings opened this item and discussed the sample form (included in agenda packet). This form will show the recommendation, vote, majority opinion, and dissenting opinion.

After a brief discussion, Member Peace made a motion to approve the Recommendation Form as presented. Member Patterson seconded the motion. The motion and second was approved unanimously by all Board members present.

ITEM 9. Board Appointments

- a. Chair**
- b. Vice-Chair**
- c. Public Hearing- all who wish to speak must be under oath**

Chairman Ewings opened this item and asked Mr. Stumb, Planning Administrator if this was not done by Council. Mr. Stumb advised Chairman Ewings the new policy adopted gives this responsibility to the Board. The appointment of a Chair and Vice-Chair will come from members of the Board. Prior, there

were 8 voting members and 1 Chair that only voted in the case of a tie vote. The new policy will have 8 Board members with one (1) of the 8 members being a chairman. In theory you could have a tie vote and would be sent to Council as an unfavorable report.

Chairman Ewings discussed his concerns with only an 8 member Board and asked some members of Council in the audience why Council changed the procedure for this Board. Council member Talbert advised Chairman Ewings that Manager Bailie wanted clarification on how to organize the boards. Karen, I, and Manager Bailie devised this method for the Planning Boards. We talked about the possibility of tie situations on the board and felt this has not been a problem in the past. Council member Bridges discussed equal representation from each ward.

Member Sikes discussed the spokesman from Planning Board to give recommendation to City Council and asked was the intent for this person to attend each Council meeting or only meetings where there may be some controversy or questions as to why the Board recommended or denied a request.

Mr. Stub, Planning Administrator advised Board members that there were 3 options for the Board to consider on this matter.

- (1) You can appoint one (1) person to come and represent the Board at all meetings
- (2) You can opt to appoint someone at the end at each of your meetings to attend on behalf of the Planning Board.
- (3) You may also elect not to appoint a spokesman.

There was considerable discussion between Chairman Ewings, Board members and Mr. Stumb, Planning Administrator regarding the need for a spokesperson to attend all Council meetings or a Council member to attend Planning Board meetings. Board member Gant asked Council members in the audience if they received copies of the Planning Board minutes. Council members advised Ms. Gant they did not. The City Clerk advised Planning Board members that draft minutes would be presented to Council in the future.

Chairman Ewings proceeded and called for motions for Chairman for the Planning Board.

Member Patterson nominated Member Richard McNabb for Chairman of the Planning Board. With no other nomination, Member Gibson made a motion to close nominations on said person. Prior to a second or vote, there was discussion between Council member Bridges and Planning Board members concerning the approval of Planning Board members by Council.

After discussion, Board member Phillips made a motion to table this issue until a later date. Member Gant seconded the motion. Prior to the vote, Member Gibson rescinded his motion concerning this item. The motion and second to table this item was approved unanimously by all Board members present.

ITEM 10. Comments from the Board
NONE

ITEM 11. Comments from the Staff
NONE

ITEM 12. Adjournment

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Ewings called for a motion to adjourn the February 22, 2005 meeting of the Trinity Planning Board.

Board member Phillips made a motion to adjourn the February 22, 2005 Meeting. Board member McNabb seconded the motion. The motion and second was approved unanimously by all Board members present.